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MARTHA

An Opera, in Four Acts.

MUSIC BY FLOTOW.

ADAPTED BY C. M. RICHINGS.

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MUSIC BY FLOTOW.

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F. Scott Smith

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RICHINGS ENGLISH OPERA COMPANY.

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DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

PLUNKETT, a wealthy young Farmer.

LIONEL, his adopted Brother, afterwards Earl of Derby.

LORD TRISTAN MICKLEFORD, Lady Harriet's Cousin.

THE SHERIFF OF RICHMOND.

FOOTMAN TO LADY HARRIET.

FIRST FARMER.

SECOND FARMER.

LADY HARRIET DURHAM, Maid of Honor to the Queen.

NANCY, her waiting Maid.

MOLLY PITT,
POLLY SMITH,
BETSY WITT,
} Servant Girls.

FARMER'S WIFE

Farmers, Farmers' Wives, Servants, Ladies, Hunters, Huntresses and Footmen.

Your cold, haughty heart to win!
Is there aught in this alarming?
Is there aught alarming?

Lady. Vain belief! how can rejoice me
Such insipid, idle love?
For to please and interest me
Flattery is not enough!

Nan. Riches heap on you their treasures,
Honor high is offer'd you.

Lady. In the midst of gold and pleasures
Weariness alone I see.

Nancy. That is really too distressing;
Hers is call'd a brilliant lot!
If not love does work a wonder,
Fades this flower and blossoms not!
It is really too distressing;
Hers is called a brilliant lot!
If not love does work a wonder,
Fades this flower and blossoms not.
Balls and tournaments are giving,
And your colors win the prize,
Proudly from the banners waving,
While the victor vainly sighs
For a smile from your fair eyes,
Which his armor penetrated!

Lady. All my glowing ardent wishes
Please me not, are they fulfill'd!
What a happiness I dreamed
Always has disgust instill'd.
The homages they offer,
Praise and honor they bestow
Leave me joyless, once obtained
Do not make with pride me glow.

Nan. Then, from ennui to save you,
Nothing is for you remaining
But to let your heart be conquer'd,
Not a particle retaining!

[TRISTAN *announced by a footman.*]

Foot. Sir Tristan of Mickleford!
Member of the house of Lords!
Knight with many orders honor'd—

Lady. (*interrupting him.*) We will spare you the remainder

Tri. (*entering.*) Most respected gracious cousin,
Lady of Her Majesty—
Most respectfully I venture—

Lady. (*impatiently.*) Quick, my lord, for time doth flee.

Tri. May I inquire—

Lady. You may, Sir.

Tri. If the night has brought you rest,
And for new diversions zest?

Lady. Answer, Nancy!

Nan. (*to* TRISTAN.) Little, Sir.

Tri. Deign to listen to the programme
I've laid out for us to-day:
Luncheon at the donkey-races—

Nan. (Incomplete without my lord!)

Tri. Then a promenade—

Lady. Not with me, Sir!

Tri. Then a horse-race—

Lady. (*ironically.*) Where you will
Through the lightness of your body
Surely win all the prizes.
(*aside.*) Ah, what madness, gross and glaring,
What display of vanity;

Idle fancies make him daring,
And he feigns to sigh for me.

Tri. See her smiling and delighted
My devotion to behold.
Yes, to move her heart of marble
Takes a lover shrewd and bold.

Nan. [*to* TRISTAN.] See her smiling and delighted
Your devotion to behold;
Press your suit with fire and ardor
Be a lover brave and bold.

Tri. (*to* LADY.) Tournament?

Lady. Bah! my fan, Sir!

Tri. (*fetches and presents it.*)
Boat excursion?

Lady. Please, my perfume! [*Tristan fetches it as before.*

Nan. (His love evaporates already.)

Lady. How chilly feels the air?
Would you close the window, cousin? [*Tristan goes and shuts it.*

Tri. (*aside.*) Camp-work!

Lady. Oh! this atmosphere—
Air—the window—

Tri. Open?

Lady. Aye, Sir! [*Tristan re-opens it.*

Nan. (My lord's running for the prize!)

[*Here the song of Servant-girls, bound for the fair at Richmond, is heard from outside.*]

CHORUS OF SERVANT GIRLS.

Light and gay, all the day,
Street and lane,
Hill and plain,
Rings along
Merry song,
Till the night silence bids.
Pleasure starts,
Glee imparts,
Cheerful songs to youthful hearts.
Traveling thus,
Sorrowless,
Are we to the Richmond mart.

Lady. Hark, what sounds?

Nancy. How gay a chorus!

Tri. Gay? Pshaw! Common, Miss, say I.

Lady. Happy people these must be!

Tri. Know these people happiness? [*The Chorus is repeated outside.*

Nan. (*who has gone to the window, and looked at the singers.*)
To the Servants' Fair, at Richmond,
These plump lasses way are making,
Where the sturdy minded farmers
Smart survey of them are taking,
Carrying each a bundle light,
And their bonnets flower-deck'd,
To the dance first, then to work
Wander they, with lightsome hearts!

Tri. Dull affair!

Nan. Time-honor'd custom!

Lady. Ah! most charming rural scene!
Could I, unknown, with them mingle
On the luscious village green!

Tri. Absurd wish this!

Lady. How obliging!
Follow I shall my fancy now,
Just to tease your noble Lordship!

Tri. Lady! Cousin! Hear I right?

Lady. Nancy, find us peasant dresses,
To those lasses, garments mated!
Tri. Might I ne'er thus see you humbled!
Lady. Humbled, cousin, elevated!
(*Laughing.*) New-made rustics at a hop,
Martha, Nancy, and Sir Bob!
Tri. Who is Bob?
Lady. Bob are you!
Tri. No, not I! Be Bob who may!
Lady. (*approaching him with feigned tenderness.*)
How? Tristan! Is this your affection?
Your good heart prompts your consenting.
Take this sign of my relenting! [*Gives him a bouquet.*
Tri. (*sighing.*) Ah!
Lady. Now, my ever laughing Nancy,
Teach him how the peasants dance!
Tri. (When will end these whims tormenting?)
Lady. Lay aside your graceful manners,
Stiff and heavy move about!
Nan. Feet bent outward, bold and wayward,
Briskly, crisply stamp the floor;
Hat knock'd shapeless, half tipp'd over,
Reel and swagger to and fro!
Tri. Ah, how can I?
Lady. 'Tis my pleasure!
Tri. Never! no!
Lady. From left to right!
Tri. I, a Lord!
Nan. A noble sport!
You'll easily catch the spirit, my lord!
Tra, la, la. [*They make him dance.*
Lady. Quicker move you—
Nan. 'Twill improve you!
Tri. Mercy! I'm out of breath.
Lady. Less of polish!
Nan. Imitate, Sir, genuine nature.
Tri. Nature? How? It were my death.
Lady, What prodigious agility!
Bravo! bravo! what vigor!
Tri. What tormenting exercises!
Enough! Or I shall faint!
Nan. How graceful, what handsome bearing!
I cannot help admiring him!
Tri. (I look very much like a bear
Whom monkeys are forcing to dance.) [*Exeunt, dancing.*

SCENE THE SECOND.

Market-place at Richmond.—Tents, shops, tables, benches, &c.—Farmers, Peasants, afterwards Servants.

CHORUS.

Maidens, bright and fair,
Draw near, draw near; free is the Fair!
Hither hasten quick;
Through diligence lies the way to luck!
Haste you, hasten, cheerful lasses,
Be not tardy on your way,
For the Fair will soon be open,
And advancing is the day.

Done! and the bargain consummated
Neither party can undo it;
Is the servant faithful, honest,
Neither party then will rue it.
They are coming, gaily singing;
Let us meet them, welcome bringing.

[*Enter* LIONEL *and* PLUNKETT.]

Plu. What a clatt'ring, what a prattling,
Volleys of bewild'ring sound!
Healthy tongues, that know their business,
In this motley crowd abound.
Well, my brother, a selection
Hast thou made with circumspection?
Lio. Ah! what for?
Plu. What for? Assistance
On our farm we sadly need—
Which (our mother hath so will'd it)
Now together we must keep.
Lio. Blessed be her mem'ry ever!
Plu. Aye! she was an excellent soul;
Such a manager was never
Born to bustle, to control.
Thine were always her caresses!
Tender hearted! well they might;
I, more sturdy, got the scoldings:
As her child, they were my right.
Lio. You, dear brother!
Plu. Thou art calling
Not a soul to love thee, thine;
Friends and kinsman never knew'st thou,
Should not then their place be mine?
Lio. Lost, proscrib'd, a friendless pilgrim,
Sinking at your cottage door,
'Neath your friendly roof sought shelter;
In his arms his son he bore.
This poor pilgrim was my father,
Who to you did me confide;
With his dying breath imploring
That his child through life you'd guide.
Plu. We have never learnt his station,
Never learnt your father's rank;
All he left to tell the secret
Is the jewel on your hand.
"If your fate should ever darken,"
Quoth he, "show it to the Queen,
She will save you, she will guard you
When no other help is seen."
Lio. Here in peace and sweet contentment
Have I pass'd my life with you;
Stronger, daily, grew a friendship
That forever lasts, when true.
Brother, think not wealth and splendor,
If perchance they e'er be mine,
Can as happy this heart render
As the friendship fix'd in thine!

[*The clock strikes mid-day.*

Cho. Hark, hark, the bell! In wig and robe
The Sheriff comes the Fair to ope!
Draw near, now, lasses, gather round!
Sher. [*entering pompously.*) Exit
For your government a space
Open, low-bred populace!
Cho. For the government leave a space!

Sher. (*unfolding a large parchment.*)
I shall now the law expound;
Listen all, come close around.
"Anna, we, the Queen of England,"
(Hats off, as I hav't myself:
Never comes amiss politeness,)
"We acknowledge by this Act"
These to be the rules exact
Of the yearly Richmond Fair:
That all contracts made with servants
In the open market here,
Shall be binding with both parties
For the then ensuing year.
Not a power there is can break them,
If money has been given and taken.
Did you hear?
Cho. We knew it this long time.
Sher. Now, my girls, we'll learn your virtues.
[*One of the servants advances.*
Tell us yours first, Molly Pitt.
First Ser. I'm in sowing and in mowing,
And in reaping, cutting, sweeping,
Cutting, knitting, dresses fitting,
Quite expert, believe me, Sir.
Sher. Price, four guineas! Who'll engage her?
A Farmer. I will run the risk and danger.
Sher. What can you do, Polly Smith?
Second Ser. (*advancing.*)
I'm at baking, pudding making,
Roasting, broiling, stewing, boiling,
Sweets abounding, cakes compounding,
Rated as a first-rate hand.
Sher. Price, five guineas! Who will try her?
A Farmer's wife. I will, Mister City-crier!
Sher. What can you do, Betsy Witt?
Third Ser. (*advancing.*)
To my master I shall prove me
Faithful warden of the garden,
Digging, sowing, reaping, mowing,
And the poultry feeding well.
Sher. Kitty Bell and Liddy Well,
And Nelly Box and Sally Fox!
Cho. I can well take care of babies,
Feed them, dress them, rock to sleep them.
Chickens, pigeons, ducks
I know how to provide for.
I would try it, if I can,
With some nice old gentleman,
Lone old widower he might be,
With no other help but me.
Sher. Your cackling stop! You make me deaf!
Farmers. Ready to trade we are;
Look ye for masters now!
[*All gather round the magistrate.*

[*Enter* Lady Harriet, Nancy, Tristan, *in peasants' dresses; afterwards* Lionel *and* Plunkett.]

Lady. Forward, Bob! What! need you pulling?
Nan. Bob, my friend, why look so sour?
Tri. Bob? oh fie! (There's no escaping
Since I am in Amor's pow'r!)
Lady & Nan. How with full contentment beaming
Ev'ry sunburnt face appears!

Tri. I'm with rage and anger teeming,
And can scarce withhold my tears.
Plu. (*entering with* LIONEL.) Thunder! there's a brace of darlings!
Lio. Aye, indeed, they're young and fair!
Plu. Much too fair for heavy labor.
Lio. For housework too?
Plu. That they might bear.
Tri. Note these fellows keenly staring!
Let's begone!
Lady & Nan. We're pleased to stay.
Tri. Quite suspicious is their bearing.
Come, begone!
Lady. No; I'm your servant not,
Nor is such place to my liking.
Tri. Nonsense! Stay then; be it so.
Nan. (*seeing herself observed by* PLUNKETT *and* LIONEL.)
(*To* TRISTAN.) Well, I think you'll have to face it,
If with you she will not go!
Lady. No, with him I will not go.
Plu. & Lio. You hear it, Sir?
She will not go.
Plu. Comfort take! There's others yet.
Girls! you yonder! Hither hasten;
Here's a bidder, guinea laden!
Tri. How malicious!
Lady & Nan. Fun delicious!
[*The girls come forward and surround* TRISTAN.
All. I'm in sowing, and in mowing, &c.
Lady & Nan. How they bother and distress him,
With tumultuous noises press him!
Closer round him draws their circle,
And he yields in awkward flight!
Tri. My dilemma is dismaying!
Naughty witches, stop your braying!
To appease them nought availeth,
Reason faileth,
Flight alone may save me yet.
[TRISTAN *retreats from the stage, followed by the servant girls.*
Lady. Nancy! See them eye us keenly!
Nan. Yes, we please, for all I know.
Plu. (*to* LIONEL.) One of them would suit exactly.
Lio. Would you separate them? No!
Lady. (*to* NANCY.) Is he not a bashful fellow?
Wonder how such peasant talks.
Nan. Plain, for one thing!
Plu. (*to* LIONEL.) Why so timid?
Go, address them!
Lio. Friend, I'm afraid.
Plu. Ah, poltroon! Look how I do it.

[*Advances towards the ladies, as if to speak to them, but checks himself and returns.*]

Nan. He too is dumb! Stupid things!
Let us go.
Lady. Yes, let us go.
Lio. Friend they're going.
Plu. 'Twere too bad.
Lady & Nan. Now indeed our leave we may be taking,
Since their bashfulness thus our enjoyment mars.
Our bold game at this point terminating
Leaves us but to bless our lucky stars!
Yes indeed our leave we may be taking.
Since their bashfulness thus our enjoyment mars:
Our bold game at this point terminating
Leaves us but to praise our lucky stars!

Lio. & Plu. Such rare chance must not slip by untaken,
Servant girls like these are jewels seldom found!
Those arch looks my heart have sorely shaken;
Not without her shall I leave this place!
Plu. (Courage, PLUNKETT!) [*Advances resolutely.*
Wait one minute!
You're our choice, girls—have no fears!
If you're honest, smart and thrifty,
May we be together years.
Lio. Yes, for years.
Lady. And serving you, Sir?
Nan. (*laughing.*) Ha, ha, ha, ha!
Lio. You're laughing?
Plu. Let them! Why not laughing earn one's money,
If the work is done as well?
Lady and Nan. Work? we?
Plu. (*to* NANCY.) Geese and pigs and chickens
Shall be entrusted to your care.
(*to* LADY HARRIET.) You shall till with hoe and shovel
Field and garden.
Lio. Friend, forbear;
She is poorly built for farming;
She may at home—
Plu. Our socks be darning.
Fifty crowns your yearly wages,
And for extras we'll throw in
Half a pint of ale on Sundays,
And plum pudding New-year's day.
Lady & Nan. Who'd refuse such tempting offer?
Lio. & Plu. Yes?
Lady & Nan. Yes, yes! [*They shake hands.*
Lio. & Plu. Here—take your money;
For the journey quick prepare!

[TRISTAN *re-appears upon the stage, still pursued by the Servants.*]

Tri. Go—leave off—here's money, wenches!
Plague upon your crazy band!

[*He throws them a purse; the girls desist. Seeing the Ladies converse with* LIONEL *and* PLUNKETT.]

Ho! What's this? You are forgetting—
Come away! [*Advancing towards* PLUNKETT.
Plu. (*brusquely.*) What may you want?
Lady & Nan. Yes, we'll go.
Plu. I'd like to see you!
Money binds you!
Tri. To be bor'd!
Know then—
Lady. (*aside to* TRISTAN.) So you want my ruin?
What if this transpires at court!
Nan. We should be disgraced forever!
Rather die—but tell them never.
Tri. Come then! [*Tries to lead the Ladies off.*
Plu. (*checking him.*) Remain you!
We have hir'd you for a year;
Ask the Sheriff, he'll attest it,
And will show our title clear.
Sher. & Cho. If there's money given and taken
The bargain must remain unshaken.
Yes, the law knows no relenting.
Since you're bound by free consenting,
Nought can free you from your fetters
Now, until a year is o'er!

Aye, lass, the bargain's made!
Aye, lass, the money's paid!
Sacred keep your vows,
And never swerve from duty's path.
Fickle hearts and minds
Are justly shunned by honest men.

ACT THE SECOND.

SCENE THE FIRST.

The interior of Plunkett's Farm-house.

[LIONEL, PLUNKETT, LADY HARRIETT *and* NANCY.]

Lio. & Plu. This is your future dwelling;
And traveling has an end.
Lady & Nan. We're reaping for our folly
Full measur'd punishment!
Lio. & Plu. Our house and home are yours now,
Their comfort you will share.
Lady & Nan. Their house and home are ours now,
O we unhappy pair!
Lio. & Plu. At dawn of day and morn's first glimpse
Be up and stir about!
Lady & Nan. What vulgar ways they make us take!
Before the sun is out!
More monstrous things they'll next command
That we never heard about!
Lio. And extra crowns your purse will see
Before the year is out!

Plu. (*pointing to door.*) This door leads to your chamber!
Lady. (*starting to go to it.*) Then we bid you good-night.
Nan. Good-night!
Plu. Not quite so fast—first get us some supper—girls!
Lady. Get supper! the barbarians!
Nan. Get supper! get it yourself!
Lio. Why not let them go? They're tired—
Plu. It won't do to be too kind.
Nan. What a brute!
Plu. Stop a bit—what are your names?
Lady. Names!
Nan. Names!
Lio. Yes—what are you called?
Plu. You're a pair of smart lasses—haven't you any names.
Lady. (*hesitating.*) Mine is Martha.
Lio. Martha!
Lady. Yes!
Plu. (*to* NANCY.) Well—and yours?

Nan. (*aside.*) What shall I say?

Plu. Don't you know it?

Nan. Ju-li-a!

Plu. (*imitating her.*) Julia! You're highly named—girl—but I like it! (*ironically.*) Julia—will your ladyship take my cloak and hat off?

Nan. (*pertly.*) Do it yourself.

Plu. (*roughly.*) Well!—you're a saucy one! I'll make you—

Lio. (*interposing.*) Nay—don't be so blunt—you frighten the girl! Don't order her—do like me? Request her mildly—I'll show you. (*mildly.*) Martha—will you please to take my hat and cloak.

[*He takes off his hat and cloak and holds them out to* LADY H., *who turns her back upon him and goes up the stage.* LIONEL *is obliged to pick them up and hang them himself.*]

Lio. & Plu. Surpris'd I am and astounded,
And I can say no more;
Such impudence unbounded
Was never seen before.

Lady & Nan. Surpris'd they're and confounded,
And sorely puzzled is their brain;
This blow has smartly sounded,
May be they'll never try again!

Plu. Quick now, fetch the spinning-wheels
From out the corner!

Lady & Nan. Do you want us then to spin?

Lio. Yes, most surely.

Plu. Do you think
That for talking we engag'd you?

Lady & Nan. Ha, ha, ha! To see us spinning!

Plu. Ha, ha, ha! To see you spinning!
If you want your wages paid
You must earn them first, my maid.
Come and make then a beginning.
Fetch the wheels now!

Lady & Nan. We obey, sir!

Lio. (*to* PLUNKETT.) Not so harsh, you frighten them.

[*The ladies fetch the wheels and place them in the foreground.*

Plu. Pshaw! Begin then, I command it.

Lady & Nan. I cannot!

Lio. & Plu. How? What?
Sit down now!

Lady & Nan. We're seated. [*Taking seats behind the wheels.*

Plu. Turn the wheel! brr, brr, brr!
[*Imitating the noise of the machine.*

Lady & Nan. It will not turn!

Lio. With your thumb and your first finger
Draw a thread and twist it round.

Lady & Nan. But the stubborn wheel won't move, sir.

Plu. Turn it!

Lady & Nan. It turns not.

Lio. Push then!

Lady. It moves not!

Plu. Won't it? Can't you spin then?

Lady & Nan. Never learnt it. Teach us!

Plu. Be attentive then!

Plu. & Lio. (*spinning.*)
When the foot the wheel turns lightly,
Let the hand the thread entwine;
Draw and twist it, neatly, tightly,
Then 'twill be both strong and fine.

Lady. What a charming occupation,
Thus to make the thread entwine;
Gently guided, drawn and twisted,
It becomes both strong and fine;
Ah! ah, ah, ah, ah, ah, ah, ah, ah, ah, ah, ah!
Lio. & Plu. Have observ'd you?
Lady & Nan. Yes, we have.
Lio. & Plu. Comprehended?
Lady & Nan. Yes, we have.

[NANCY *turns* PLUNKETT'S *spinning-wheel over and runs off, followed by* PLUNKETT.

Lady. Nancy—I mean Julia, stay! Oh, dear! she's left me here alone with—(*she turns to follow her.*)

Lio. (*stopping her.*) Nay, Martha, you must not run away! Are you afraid?

Lady. Afraid! of you! (*looking at him.*) No!

DUETT.

Lady. To his eye, mine kindly meeting,
Evil intent is unknown,
Yet my heart is strangely beating,
Since I'm am left with him alone.
Lio. Her clear eyes with looks entreating,
Speak to me in thrills unknown,
And my heart is strangely beating,
Since I am left with her alone.
Ah, how could I ever scold her,
Ever speak in unkind tones!
Might I but my heart unfold her!
Lady. (Whither, Nancy, hast thou fled?
Ah, poor me, she tarries yet!)
Lio. Martha! Let me then confess it:
Ever since thine angel face
First appear'd before my vision—
Lady. (Quite alarming is his gaze!)
Lio. Martha! Martha!
Lady. (He grows bolder!)
Lio. See my heart is good and true.
Lady. Yes, you are a kindly master,
Much more kind than I deserve.
Lio. You deserve?
Lady. I'm but a good for nothing
Little body, sir! Let me go; your idle servant
Cannot earn the bread you give her!
Lio. My heart would break should I send thee away!
No—no work shall e'er dismay you,
But throughout the livelong day
Sing you, to our work us cheering,
Many a gay, melodious lay!
Sing a song me!
Lady. I'm too bashful.
Lio. Let it be a people's lay,
Sent by God unto the poor.
Lady. Ah, no!
Lio. (*taking a nosegay from the lady's bosom.*)
I'll exchange this nosegay
For a song!
Lady. Ah, sir, you jest!
Lio. 'Tis my will!
Lady. Your will?
Lio. Nay, I entreat you.
Lady. Ah! your entreaties I withstand not.

ROMANCE.

Lady. 'Tis the last rose of summer,
Left blooming alone;
All her lovely companions
Are faded and gone;
No flower of her kindred,
No rosebud is nigh
To reflect back her blushes,
Or give sigh for sigh!
I'll not leave thee, thou lone one,
To pine on the stem;
Since the lovely are sleeping,
Go sleep thou with them.
Thus kindly I scatter
Thy leaves o'er the bed—
Where thy mates of the garden
Lie scentless and dead.

Lio. Martha!

Lady. Master!

Lio. My lip confesseth
What hath liv'd within my heart
Ever since your eye smil'd coyly
To me on the Richmond mart.
Martha!

Lady. Let me!

Lio. From the moment
When I beheld you—

Lady. No further!

Lio. Martha!

Lady. Oh, cease thee!

Lio. Martha!

Lady. I go!

Lio. Oh, stay thee!

Lady. I go—

Lio. Stay and hear me.
Oh, accept in holy union
Here my hand, oh, be my wife!

Lady. God what hear I!

Lio. See prostrate me—

Lady. Fearful passion!

Lio. At thy feet I pray—

Lady. (How can I elude him?—)
Sir, I am not unfeeling,
Yet I shall laugh to see you kneeling.
Pardon me! ha, ha, ha, ha!

Lio. With our marriage at an ending
Is all difference of birth!

Lady. Pray, excuse me, if offending,
But this does increase my mirth!

Lio. She's laughing at my sorrow, and at my deep distress;
She scorns my soft approaches, my loving tenderness.
To share my humble cottage, proudly the maid disdains;
In vain my eye is weeping, in vain my lip complains.
Now happiness farewell, farewell, now happiness farewell,
If naught to love can move her, heaven remove from me this spell!
Lest I must bid to happiness and peace a sad farewell!

Lady. Ah, his eye of sorrow speaking, deeply penetrates my heart;
Sad fate that love so pure and true must burn without reward.
His woeful looks invite me to share his humble lot.
Oh! heav'n protect me kindly that he beguile, beguile me not.
I feel my bosom yielding, I feel my bosom yielding,
Protect, protect me God, that he beguile me not;
His eye of sorrow speaking, deeply penetrates my heart,
Sad fate that love so pure and true must go without reward.

[*Enter* NANCY, *pulled in by* PLUNKETT.]

Plu. Don't you try this game again, girl!
Where do you suppose she was?
In the kitchen was the vixen
Breaking bottles, glasses, dishes,
And a good deal have I suffer'd,
Till at last I caught the lass!
Nan. Let me go! Don't make me mad, sir,
Or some scratching you will see!
Plu. (*releasing her.*) By the prophets! she has spirit!
I confess, that pleases me!
Nan. Martha, Martha!
Plu. Pooh! What's wrong with you now?
Standing as if thunder-struck!
Get yourselves to bed, ye idlers!
Off with you my saucy puck!
Plu. & Lio. Midnight 't sounds!
Lady & Nan. Midnight 't sounds!
Lio. (*to* LADY.) Cruel one, may dreams transport thee
To a future rich and blest!
Ah! and to-morrow, gently yielding,
Smile upon me! sweetly rest!
Plu. (*to* NANCY.) Sleep thee well, and may thy temper
Sweeter in our service grow;
Still your sauciness is rather
To my liking—do you know?
Lady & Nan. Yes, good night! such night as never
We have lived to see before;
Were I but away, I'd never
Play the peasant any more.
Plu. & Lio. Good night!
Lady & Nan. Good night!

[LADY *and* NANCY *retire into their chamber,* PLUNKETT *and* LIONEL *exeunt by the large door, locking it after them.*]

[LADY HARRIET *and* NANCY, *coming out of their chamber again.*]

Lady. Nancy!
Nan. Lady!
Lady. What begin now?
Nan. What advise you?
Lady. You say first!
Nan. Dead of night, and no protector!
Lady. And lock'd in, which is the worst.
Nan. What a fatal day has prov'd this!
Lady. Fatal day, more fatal night!
Nan. Still—these folks are not unpleasant,
Lady. They are honest—
Nan. (*archly.*) And polite.
Lady. If the Queen should hear of it!
Nan. What rich stock for courtiers' wit!

[*A noise is heard from outside, near the window to the right.*

Lady. What a noise this? What report?
Nan. Steps—a voice—there's succor near!
Tri. (*from outside.*) Cousin! cousin!
Lady. Tristan!
Nan. 'Tis my lord!
Lady. He will scold—I well deserve it!
But he'll save us!

[TRISTAN *entering through the window.*]

Tri. Yes! Here I am!
Cousin! You—in this vulgar habitation!
Nan. Hush thee! You'll wake all earth
With such loud talking!
Lady. Come, away!
Tri. Lest we should be heard and taken,
I have left my carriage waiting
At the corner.
Nan. Let us fly then!
Lady, Nan. & Tri. Fly in haste we, softly treading,
Night's her cov'ring mantle spreading;
Ere a bird herald's the day
And we are off and far away. [*They depart through the window.*

ACT THE THIRD.

SCENE THE FIRST.

A forest. On the left a small inn. PLUNKETT *and Farmers sitting at a table covered with jugs and mugs.*

SONG AND CHORUS.

Plu. I want to ask you, can you not tell me,
What to our land the British strand,
Gives life and power? say!
That is old porter, brown and stout,
We may of it be pretty proud,
It guides John Bull, where'er he be,
Through fogs and mists through land and sea.
Cho. Yes, hurra! the hops and hurra the malt,
They are life's flavor and life's salt, hurra!
They are life's flavor and life's salt! hurra!
Plu. And that explaineth where'er it reigneth
Is joy and mirth! At ev'ry hearth
Resounds a joyous song!
Look at its goodly color here!
Where else can find you such good beer?
So brown and stout and healthy too!
The porter's health I drink to you!
Cho. Hurra the hops and hurra the malt,
They are life's flavor and life's salt! hurra!
[*Horns sound the chase.*
Plu. Hark! the merry horns resounding!
Yes, the Queen she hunts to-day
With her ladies, light and gay,
Through this forest, game abounding.
Cho. To the chase invites their playing!
Plu. Go then, while mine host I'm paying!
[*Exeunt Chorus to the right*—PLUNKETT *goes into the inn.*

[*Enter Huntresses, afterwards* NANCY.]

Cho. Ladies we—with hunter's glee
Are chasing a game—
Tra, la, la, la!

Cunningly and stealthily,
And deadly our aim.
Ha, la, la, lee!
Our brave huntsmen are the game
We smartly pursue daily anew!
By our eyes they're hit and laid.
With arrows fleet low at our feet.
Now we awe them and subdue them,
Now we coax them and allure them,
Now pursue them to the nets,
Till in the snare the poor thing frets:
That's our sport and our delight.

Nan. Why my soul art thou heavy with grief
And my spirit dejected and low?
Why with sighs, doth my bosom heave,
This my bosom that sighs ne'er did know?
Is it of love that thou whispers, my heart?
Hast thou been gain'd by amor's art?
Ah! well may for love I sigh and pine,
Ah! well may for love I sigh and pine;
Happy the heart which of love is the shrine,
For love is life's bloom, life's radiant sun.

[*The ladies advance and repeat the chorus.*

Cho. Ladies we, &c.

Nan. Huntress fair
Hastens where
She is game detecting,
And her dart
Wounds the heart
That was unsuspecting.
Restlessly
Wanders she,
And is never tired;
Takes good aim,
Till the game
Is with love inspired.
Cupid like a rogue he is
Shot the dart, did not miss.
From her dart—is the heart
Always sorely bleeding;
Then she heals—for she feels
It is comfort needing.
What a look—from him took
Has a look restored;
Gone is pain—and again
Mounts it where it soared.

[*Enter* PLUNKETT, *at back.—Seeing the Ladies he stops.*]

Plu. There seems to be good game afoot here;
I'll see if I can't catch one or two!

Nan. (*looking around.*)
Where can the Countess be?
She seeks solitude.
And seems very unhappy,
And has been so ever since—
My good friend can you tell me—

Plu. What, Julia, in huntress' gear?

Nan. Well, my friend.

Plu. I am not your friend.
You wait! I'll make you pay
For your headlong running away!

Nan. You are mad!

Plu. Fibs are of no use;
Come home with me!

Nan. Help! Assistance!
Plu. What wickedness!
Nan. What impudence! [*The Ladies re-enter.*
Here's a game for you, my ladies!
Let's see how he will like your spears!
[*All the Ladies surround* Plunkett, *threatening him.*
Cho. You have fallen into our hands,
You will vainly attempt to fly;—
Let him feel the keen points of our weapons;
Let him prepare to die!
Plu. Gently, gently—hold!
Hold your hands—
I already feel the points of their weapons!
By St. George and Belzebub,
Fair dames ground your arms! [*He rushes off hastily.*
Cho. Let him feel the points of our lances;
Let him die without delay! [*They rush after him in pursuit.*

[*Enter* Lionel, *pale and dejected.*]

Lio. "I will detach thee
From thy frail trembling stem,
And place thee on my heart;
There shalt thou die, sweet flower!"
Where am I? I feel that I am near her!
She who has become the arbitress of my destiny!
All brilliant now I see her,
With her beautiful virginal smile,
Which, for me, changed earth into Heaven!

SONG.

Like a dream bright and fair,
Chasing every thought of care,
Those sweet hours pass'd with thee,
Made the world all joy for me.
But alas! thou art gone,
And that dream of bliss is o'er,
Ah! I hear now the tone of thy gentle voice no more;
Oh! return happy hours fraught with hope,
With hope so bright!
Come again, come again sunny days of pure delight,
Of pure delight!
Like a dream bright and fair,
Chasing every thought of care,
Those sweet hours pass'd with thee
Made the world all joy for me.
Fleeting vision clothed in brightness,
Wherefore thus, so soon depart;
O'er my pathway shed thy lightness,
Once again, and glad my heart!
Once again, and glad my heart,
Yes, glad my heart.

[*Enter* Lady Harriet *and* Sir Tristan.]

Tri. The Queen is resting yonder. Fair cousin, why have you left the august presence of her majesty?

Lady. Because I wish to be alone.

Tri. Alone! with me?

Lady. It matters not. With you or without you I am still alone—my heart is still oppressed with sadness. Leave me!

Tri. Why are you sad? Can I not soothe your grief?

Lady. Don't plague me! Don't notice me!

Tri. But to leave you alone in this wild place—

Lady. It is my will! Go!

Tri. I obey—most gentle cousin! (*aside.*) Poor thing, she's evidently struggling with her love for me. (*aloud*) I won't be long away.

[*Exit* SIR TRISTAN.

ROMANCE.

Lady. Here in deepest forest shadows,
Under drooping whisp'ring boughs,
May confess I my deep sorrows,
Dream of love's enchanting vows.
Oh my heart is mourning sadly!
Were but the belov'd one nigh!
Now I left the crowd so gladly,
To the silent woods to hie.

Lio. (*entering.*) Ah! that voice!

Lady. Heaven! whom do I see?

Lio. A lady!—

Lady. What! he here!

Lio. Martha! Martha!

Lady. (*aside.*) How shall I
Escape this danger?

Lio. Ah! thou hast returned!
Thanks, kind Heaven!
Ah! 'tis you—you who fled from me!—

Lady. (*aside.*) What a trial!

Lio. Before mine eyes beheld thee
My heart recognized thee!

Lady. Recognized me! you are mistaken.

Lio. No.
Those features, those lovely features,
Are graven on my heart!
It is thy voice, Martha, which I hear;
I am not the victim of an error.

Lady. You are dreaming!—

Lio. If it be a dream,
Oh! let me not awake from it!
Ah! I would still dream thus;
Disturb not so sweet a slumber.,

Lady. Hence, away!

Lio. No, no: in my dream
Let me take thy hand,
And imprint a kiss upon it,
To express the love I feel. [*He kisses her hand.*

Lady. Ah! I can no longer tolerate
Such gross impertinence!

Lio. Wherefore this pretence of ignorance?

Lady. Hence, peasant, and be silent!

Lio. I a peasant!—I am your master;
Mildness is lost upon you;—
I have hitherto spoken to you with amenity,
But now I command that you come with me!

Lady. Help, Tristan! [*Calling.*

[*Enter* SIR TRISTAN *afterwards followed by all.*]

Tri. (*rushing on.*) What has alarmed you?

Lady. Help me! aid me!

Tri. Who dares to—

Lio. My lord, this is my servant,
And I have a right to take her hence.

Tri. Was there ever such brazen impudence?
It fairly makes me shudder.
It is most unheard-of audacity!
This way—hither, sirs! [*Calling his friends.*

Cho. (*entering.*) What audacity!
A peasant dare to insult you!
Let so scandalous an outrage
Be punished without delay.
Lio. Such audacity!—I'm astonished!
But I recognized you at once.
No one shall dare to take her from me;
She shall return with me.
Lady. What torture! what an embroilment!
I am paying dearly for a few moments' pleasure!
They will laugh at me!
What shall I reply?—what shall I do?
Plu. (*entering.*) Whence comes all this noise?
Lio. Defend me!
Nan. (*entering.*) What is the matter?
Plu. She, too!
Nan. Keep up your courage, my lady.
Lio. (*overhearing the words "My Lady."*) Ah!
Now I comprehend all:—
That candor, that winning affability,
Was naught but a cruel jest, a heartless joke!
Ah! just heaven, canst thou permit this?
Tri. Arrest that madman!
Plu. & Lio. Arrest { him! / me!
Lady & Nan. (*aside.*) What torture!
Lio. But if an engagement has been made
By her,—
Lady. (*aside to* LIONEL.) For mercy's sake, be silent!
Lio. She accepted the earnest money;
She has bound herself to serve me.
Cho. Ha! ha! 'tis laughable!
Lady. Let him be treated with clemency,
He demands our pity;
He has evidently lost his senses,
But he is not knowingly culpable.
Lio. Oh! 'tis infamous!
Nan. (*aside.*) Poor fellow!
Plu. (*to* LIONEL.) Hear me one moment—
Tri. Away with you!
Lio. Ah! may heaven grant you pardon,
That you broke my trusting heart,
That where burning love you kindled,
You did bitter woe impart.
The others. Ah! may heaven pardon { me. / you. }
For the grief and misery inflicted on him!
{ I was / You were } his only hope.
And { I / you } have broken his heart!
Alas! what have { I / you } gained
By rendering him unhappy?
Let his present anguish tell
Tell how much he loved { me! / you! }
Tri. (*aside.*) She now sees the folly of her caprices;
She despised my counsels,
And now vainly attempts to repair her error.
By her grief I am avenged!
Cho. Let us quickly punish the imposter,
This has already been endured too long!
Hasten we back to the chase! [*Trumpets are heard.*
The Queen is approaching this way.

Lio. And with her my hopes revive!
[*Takes a ring from his finger and gives it to* PLUNKETT.
Take this ring which my father gave me,
Thou knowest for what purpose;—
I will not believe myself utterly abandoned
As long as this gage remains!

Cho. of Ladies. (*entering.*)
From the summit of the hill,
And the neighboring valley,
The trumpets recall us to the chase.
The sun is already declining,
But the bold hunter still continues the pursuit.

Cho. of Men. We are on the track of the stag!
Pursue him, over the hill
And through the valley,
In the wood and through the ravine!
[LIONEL *is taken away.—The Hunters disperse.*

ACT THE FOURTH.

SCENE THE FIRST.

Interior of Plunkett's Farm-house, as in Second Act.—PLUNKETT *discovered alone.*

Plu. Poor Lionel! he sighs, he laments,
He flies from his friend;
He is beside himself with love.
Accursed be the hour
When first we saw that girl,
When first ye brought her beneath our roof!
Soon will my Lionel die,
If no aid come from on high;
Fatal unhappy the hour,
When first his heart felt love's power;
Weeping he wanders in grief.
Naught to his pain brings relief;
Merciful God, hear my cry,
Else must my Lionel die!
Merciful God, oh, hear my cry,
Let not with grief Lionel die!
Say is this love's hidden fire
That doth my bosom inspire?
Nancy my thoughts do pursue,
Say, must I suffer them, too?
If this be love who can tell!
Must I then yield to its spell?
Let me then tell her I love:
Pity her besom shall move,
She'll not reject my proffered love,
Mine earnest pray'r her soul will move.

(*Enter* HARRIET *and* NANCY.)

Nan. My friend!

Plu. Here are both the witches!

Lady. Plunkett—my faithful friend—Nancy will disclose to you the plan we have formed—I will yet save Lionel!

Plu. May heaven assist you, my Lady.

Lady. Leave me alone for a few moments—I will try and allure him hither by that strain he knows so well! Perchance my prayers may dispel the clouds upon his brain—and restore him to peace and happiness again.

[*Exit* PLUNKETT *and* NANCY.

SONG.

April returns, crown'd
With verdure and with flowers!
More bright appears the day,—
More brilliantly shines the sun!
The earth is clothed with green;
The flowers sit smiling on their stems,
And the nightingale pours forth to Heaven
Her sweet song of love.

(*Enter* LIONEL.)

Lio. Heaven! 'tis her voice!
Lady. Lionel!
Lio. Ah!
You wish that I should die, traitress!
Iniquitous syren, cease that song.
Which brings me naught but misery and death.
(*throwing away flowers.*) Behold these flowers
Which thou gavest me, crushed and withered!
Lady. Ah! hear me, hear me!
Lio. I know too well
Thy seductive and enchanting words,
They fascinate and charm,
But they prove mortal to whoever listens to them.
Lady. Mercy, Lionel!
Lio. Mercy for thee! Never!
To insult and shame thou hast added contempt.
Lady. Let the remorse I feel,
Let these tears stay thy reproaches!
I have wrought a change in thy destiny:
I myself presented to the Queen the ring
Which thy dying father bestowed on thee.
Thou art the son of Count Derby,
Who was unjustly banished from this country!
Lio. Oh! my father!
Lady. And the Queen would make reparation to thee,
For the unjust exile of thy parent.
Thou art Count Derby, and on thy brow
Mayst place the coronet of a peer of England!
Lio. I—Count Derby!
Lady. Yes, and this hand,
Which restores thy heritage, is now offered to thee,
In pledge and token of unceasing love!
Lio. This hand, which presented the cup of anguish—
Which could wound even while caressing—
Which inflicted outrage on me,
Which brought me dishonor,
And which has prepared for me a tomb,—
Dost thou dare to offer it?
(*with energy.*) Such a hand—I refuse it!

Lady. Heavenly powers!
Lio. With mortal hatred!
This woman was my bright star of love;
For her I would have given my life;
She has robbed me of every joy on earth, and now
She is but the baneful star of my unhappiness!
Lady. Ah! read my heart—I am repentant;
Let us be united!
Let my love for thee plead my forgiveness!
Thou, oh Lionel, canst open Heaven to my view!
Ah! yield, and have pity on my anguish!
Lio. Hence, and hide thee from my fury!
Lady. In mercy, give me back thy love!
Lio. Eternal hatred reigns in my heart! [*Exit* LIONEL.

[*Enter* NANCY *and* PLUNKETT.]

Nan. (*running up to* LADY H.) Take courage, dear lady!

Plu. (*looking after* LIONEL.) He is running off like a madman! Phew! Here's a strange change in your characters—first he would and you wouldn't, now you will and he won't!

Lady. (*rising with a resolute air.*) Once again, my friends, lend me your assistance. No means must remain untried to win him back. We must now try our other scheme. My heart tells me we must succeed. The God of Love himself must battle on my side! Come, Nancy, I'm impatient to begin the trial!

[*Exit* LADY HARRIET.

Nan & Plu. I know well!—But what is to be done!
Plu. Do you know what to do? No?—Nor I neither.
Nan. We must both of us try to effect
That which she desires,
Until our new master relents.
Plu. Yes, but afterwards?—
Nan. What? what then?
Plu. I shall find myself in a state of embarrassment.
Nan. But why?
Plu. Because I shall then
Be alone in my house,
And sit and sigh in solitary melancholy,
In my poor dwelling.
Nan. You are right;
It will be melancholy enough!
You will have to sit and sigh
Alone in your solitary dwelling.
It is hard!
Plu. I'm to be pitied!
Nan. If you could—
Plu. (*aside.*) What is she going to say!
Nan. You should get a little wife!—
Consult your heart, now.
Plu. True—I know a neighbor,
A farmer's daughter!
Nan. Oh! really! you have a neighbor,
A farmer's daughter!
Well, take her.
Plu. No, I won't!
Nan. And why not?
Plu. I don't love her.
Nan. But you will find plenty of other
Young and handsome lasses.
Plu. The more I search, the less I find—
Annie won't suit me.

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